GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS

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Photograph by Salisbury from Galloway

ETHIOPIAN PRIESTS MAKING A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD

Aksum frequently resounds to the thumping drums and "sounding brass" mentioned in the Bible, still associated with services in the Coptic Church. The priests, dancing around the church or around the vestibule surrounding the Holy of Holies in the Aksum Cathedral, as did Jewish priests of the Old Testament, carry praying sticks. About one-fourth of Ethiopia's male population is attached to the church, passing an easy examination and making a cash contribution (See Bulletin No. 1).

HOW TEACHERS MAY OBTAIN THE BULLETINS

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Aksum Has Been Holy City of Ethiopia for Many Centuries

AKSUM, holy city of the Ethiopians, may be restored to its former grandeur by Italian captors, who seized the area several weeks ago. Already it has been linked to Aduwa, 12 miles to the east, by a road adequate for truck traffic.

Occupying a little valley high in the snow-capped Semyen Mountains, about 7,000 feet above the sea, Aksum ordinarily is a small town of only about 5,000 inhabitants, but the memory of ancient glories still clings to its religious relics and to huge stone monuments that stand there.

Protected by Sanctity

Its sacred character, as well as its sheltered location, has made the city immune to attack or plundering by brigands or the armies of rival Ethiopian chieftains fighting for the surrounding country. Nevertheless this is not the first time that Italian armies have held Aksum. They conquered the city and nearby territory in the war which was ended by their disastrous defeat at Aduwa in 1896.

The picturesque historic center of Ethiopia consists mainly of native homes scattered across the valley and up the mountainsides. The residences are round, with earthen floors and thatched roofs surmounted by ornamental crosses. Massive sycamore trees, now becoming scarce, shade them from the sun, and the climate is cool and fresh.

Aksum's most prominent feature is the sacred inclosure, a mile in circumference, containing the Coptic cathedral and residences for priests. Within this inclosure the persecuted and the guilty may claim sanctuary, and even the Emperor hesitates to disturb them.

The rectangular cathedral, with its flat roof, battlements, and little bell tower, rises from an ancient platform which once may have been the foundation for an early temple of sun-worship. The heavy building stones with chiseled edges, used throughout, are fitted together without mortar. Ceiling and sides are vividly painted. From the cathedral, voices of priests accompanied by drums and bells frequently rise all through the night.

How Ethiopia Fell Heir to the Ark of the Covenant

This church, according to legend, contains the original Ark of the Covenant of the Hebrews. No scholars from the western world, however, have been able to confirm or deny the legend because of the clergy's strict guard. Tradition says that the Ark was brought to Ethiopia by Menelik I, son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Menelik, according to the story, was educated at Jerusalem by Solomon until he reached the age of 19; he then carried off the Ark without permission and escaped from Solomon's pursuing army to Ethiopia.

The original church was burned when the city was sacked by the Moslem invader Mohammed Gran about 1535, but soon afterwards the present one was erected by the Portuguese, who had established friendly relations with Ethiopia. There is no record of whether the Ark was destroyed in this fire, or saved and later restored to the new church.

An ordinary round church stands outside the sacred inclosure, and women are permitted to worship here. A baptismal font is located outside the church, since only the baptized may pass within its four arched portals. Monasteries are numerous in Aksum and its surrounding territory.

UMI

Photograph by E. A. Salisbury from Ewing Galloway

COPTIC PRIESTS ON PARADE

Aksum, headquarters for Coptic priests, contains many monasteries as well as the unique cathedral surrounded by homes for bishops and assistants and smaller buildings for storing sacred relics and other valuable property. The rich trappings indicate the wealth and influence of the priesthood. Even the umbrellas must be blessed before they can serve in a religious ceremony (See Bulletin No. 1).

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Uniforms Have Helped Win Wars

CAMOUFLAGE is being called to the aid of Ethiopia. As his final paternal parting advice to his soldiers leaving for the front, Emperor Haile Selassie advised them to abandon the dazzling whiteness of their costumes in order to be less conspicuous to enemy gunmen. Thereafter, astute Ethiopians were frequently found washing their white *chammas* in the muddy streams of their country and faring forth clad in a brown that naturally matched the native earth to perfection, hiding them admirably.

Some of them have acquired uniforms of khaki with conventional visored caps, but they "naturalize" such outfits by fastening lions' manes around the caps and avoiding shoes. The lion's skin formerly figured prominently in the costume of Ethiopian warriors, reminiscent of the lion on the royal Ethiopian seal and the inscription: "The lion of the tribe of Judah shall prevail."

Color Being Submerged in Flood of Drab Costumes

A jaunty touch of color survives also in Italian uniforms, in the little cluster of hat feathers which won for the Italians the Ethiopian nickname of "rooster soldiers." England retains romantic garb for her famous Horse Guards at Whitehall, in their dazzling metal cuirasses and helmets with flowing horsehair crests.

Although a few countries, notably Spain and Japan, still use elaborate full dress uniforms, most of the world's armies are now clothed inconspicuously to avoid detection from snipers and airplanes.

The French Army was one of the last military powers to abandon its colorful uniform and join the world's drab-clad ranks. French officials decided that members of the French artillery were proud figures but easy targets in sky-blue uniforms. Thereafter they marched in khaki. A few blue uniforms, already made, were utilized, but all new ones were dust-colored.

British, Belgian, Polish, and Japanese soldiers wear khaki uniforms which blend with the earth. American soldiers wear olive drab. Germany's uniforms are field gray; Spain's, gray; those of Switzerland, Italy, and the Netherlands, gray-green to blend with fields and woods. Endless weary processions of these cheerless-looking battalions, grotesque in gas masks, and with steel helmets to ward off shrapnel, are visible proofs that war's grim business no longer masquerades as adventure.

Why Is a Uniform?

Uniforms are worn for many reasons besides that of avoiding detection. One of their chief uses is the apparently contradictory one of being a means of identification. In early warfare, save for a few exceptions, such as the Roman legions and Hannibal's Spanish troops, clad in red and white, armies were clothed miscellaneously and had to be assembled and identified by flags or decorations.

In the Revolution, before the New England troops acquired uniforms, there was much confusion because officers couldn't be distinguished from privates. Orders came from headquarters to make differentiation possible by having field officers wear red or pink cockades in their hats. In 1779, Moylan's Continental Light Dragoons, wearing 240 blue and red coats captured from the British, were in danger of being mistaken and shot for British dragoons. Washington prevented such a catastrophe by ordering the American dragoons to wear linen hunting shirts as distinguishing marks.

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A short distance farther up the valley rise about fifty impressive granite monoliths, from 20 to 60 feet high, many of them decorated with simple carvings to suggest narrow many-storied palaces like primitive skyscrapers. Many others lie broken on the ground. They are samples of progress in obelisk-making from rough unhewn stones to highly finished monuments. An inscription in Greek on one of them is evidence that Ethiopia had contacts with the ancient Greek world. Since they have altars at their bases and face the rising sun, they may be remnants of early sun-worship.

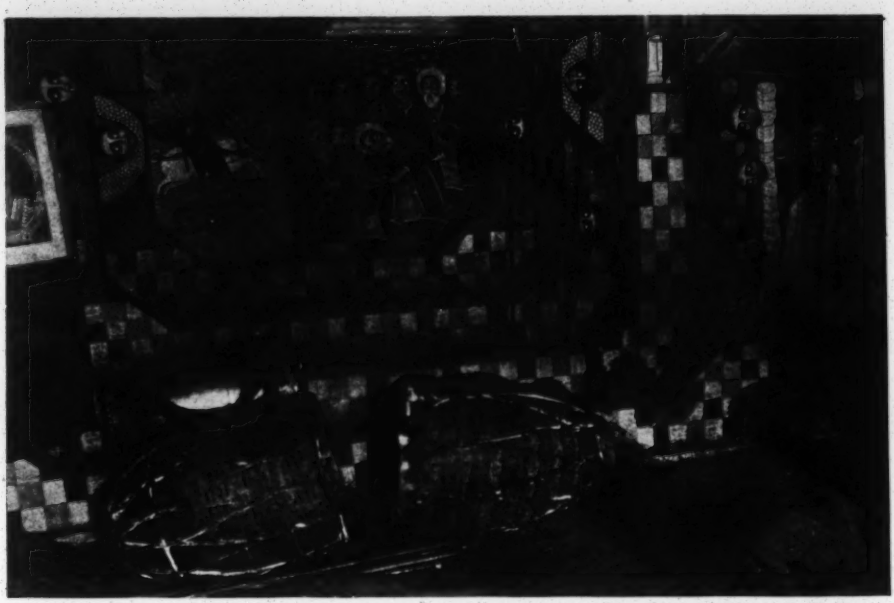
Native tradition says that Aksum dates back many thousands of years. The earliest authoritative mention of it is in a manuscript written in 67 A. D., in which it is described as the capital of the Aksumite Kingdom, which was the successor of the ancient land of Punt and the forerunner of Ethiopia. Punt is mentioned in Egyptian records as a place with which the Egyptians traded for gold, ivory, ostrich feathers, and other valuable merchandise.

Aksum is thought to have been much larger in ancient times than now, for there are traces of stone foundations of large buildings over a wide area near the present town, some of them probably temples and palaces.

Note: Additional photographs and information about Ethiopia are contained in the following: "Open-Air Law Courts of Ethiopia," *National Geographic Magazine*, November, 1935; "Traveling in the Highlands of Ethiopia," September, 1935; "Life's Tenor in Ethiopia," June, 1935; "Modern Ethiopia" and "Coronation Days in Addis Ababa," June, 1931; "Nature and Man in Ethiopia," August, 1928; "Caravan Journey Through Abyssinia," June, 1925.

Maps showing Ethiopia and the surrounding territories can be found in the following: two-page map (pp. 270-271) in the *National Geographic Magazine* for September, 1935; in the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS, week of October 7, 1935; and as a supplement to the GEOGRAPHIC NEWS BULLETINS, week of October 21, 1935.

Bulletin No. 1, December 2, 1935.



Photograph by Harry V. Harlan

RELIGION INSPIRES BOTH ART AND MUSIC IN ETHIOPIA

The ceremonial drums furnish accompaniment for ritualistic chanting in Geez, the dead language in which religious services are conducted. Churches are brilliantly decorated with paintings, depicting legends and pointing morals. The demure sidewise glance of saints and cherubim is characteristic of the virtuous in Ethiopian murals. The warrior on the white steed may be the Galla chieftain who attempted to attack Aksum but was swallowed up by the earth for the sacrilege, according to legend.

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Austria, Potential Storm Center of Europe

WHEN Austria declined to apply sanctions against Italy, she reminded the world that she may be a key to Europe's future. Even if she does not herself supply Italy's needs during the privations of war times, she can permit or deny transit to products from other countries to her warring southern neighbor.

To-day Austria has to import much of her coal and foodstuffs. Her exports are mainly manufactured goods, but their possible importance to Italy is readily apparent: articles manufactured of iron and steel, rolling stock for railroads and street car lines, leather goods, clothing, and products of wood.

Even in ordinary times geographical position gives Austria a place of exaggerated importance in international affairs. No less than six nations touch the borders of a country no larger than the State of Maine. Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Italy, and Switzerland watch every event inside these borders with consuming interest.

Many Industries but Little Coal or Food

By the Treaty of Versailles, the vast Austrian empire was whittled down to one small state of nine provinces and about 2,000,000 inhabitants, overloaded with industries, and deprived of most natural resources. Her wheat fields went to Hungary, her coal mines to Czechoslovakia, and her seaports of Trieste and Fiume to Italy.

Against these handicaps she has waged a sturdy battle—increasing agricultural production and developing water power as a substitute for coal. The fertile plains north of the Danube have been under intense cultivation, agricultural schools were established, and every possible effort was made to aid and educate the farmer. Now Austria can depend upon steadily increasing crops of wheat, rye, oats, potatoes, turnips, fruits, and sugar beets.

The mountains of Styria, a province in the southeast, are rich in iron, which is quarried, instead of mined, and the furnaces and steelworks of Graz, Leoben, and Donawitz, supply the country with 99 per cent of the metal used. Carinthian iron was familiar to the Romans, and later greatly in demand for the armor and trappings of knighthood. Austrian deposits have been known since the Iron Age.

Few Resources, Much Resourcefulness

In addition, the country has a few valuable sources of gold, silver, lead, zinc, copper, graphite, sulphur, and manganese, all of them important in warfare, even in small quantities. Of coal and lignite she lacks a supply sufficient for her own use. Rich forests cover 38 per cent of Austria's 32,369 square miles (about Scotland's area), supplying mainly pine and oak for pulp, cellulose, furniture, and musical instruments. Stock-raising and dairying are also important activities. Austrian salt mines were known to people of the Bronze Age.

In addition to upper Styria there are two other important industrial districts—Vorarlberg, famous for embroidery and cotton weaving, and Vienna with its textile mills and machine shops.

Factories and machinery offer an unexpected introduction to the gay mistress of the Danube. But the Vienna of to-day is a city of sharp contrasts and puzzling contradictions. The Schönbrunn Palace, former luxurious residence of Maria Theresa, is now an orphanage for workers' children. Modern socialism flourishes on the site of imperial traditions.

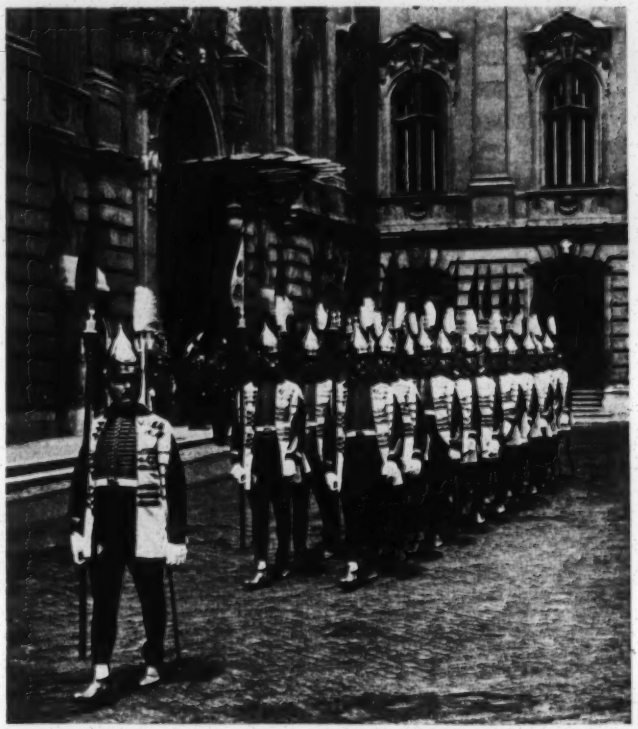
UMI

That uniforms provide one of the easiest means of picking certain people out of masses is demonstrated by the ubiquitous use of them for waitresses, shop clerks, ushers, messenger boys, and many other workers.

Uniforms, as everyone knows, have a strong psychological effect on beholders. Shakos, busbys and other formidable tall caps were probably invented to add height to soldiers and make them more impressive. The uniforms of surgeons, nurses, chauffeurs, and policemen inspire the public to place added confidence in their skill or authority.

Note: Photographs showing a variety of the world's uniforms can be found in the following: "Traveling in the Highlands of Ethiopia" and "With the Italians in Eritrea," *National Geographic Magazine*, September, 1935; "Styria, A Favored Vacation Land of Central Europe," October, 1932; "Budapest, Twin City of the Danube," June, 1932; "Some Forgotten Corners of London," February, 1932; "Washington Through the Years," November, 1931; "Florida—The Fountain of Youth," January, 1930; "The Oriental Pageantry of Northern India," October, 1929; "Down Devon Lanes," May, 1929; "On the Bypaths of Spain," March, 1929; "The Volcanoes of Ecuador," January, 1929; "Renascent Germany," December, 1928; "The Granite City of the North (Stockholm)," October, 1928; "The White City of Algiers," February, 1928; "Jamaica, The Isle of Many Rivers," January, 1927; "London from a Bus Top," May, 1926; "Rothenburg, The City Time Forgot," February, 1926; "History's Greatest Trek," November, 1925; "Tripolitania, Where Rome Resumes Sway," August, 1925; "From Granada to Gilbraltar," August, 1924; "Norway and the Norwegians," June, 1924; and "Denmark and the Danes," August, 1922.

Bulletin No. 2, December 2, 1935.



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"BLANK CARTRIDGE" UNIFORMS FOR DRESS PARADE

The Budapest Royal Castle Guards in Hungary sport dazzling uniforms designed for medieval glamour. Like blank cartridges, they might prove quite showy but ineffective in active duty today. Such uniforms are rare now, even on toy soldiers.

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St. Nicholas Calls Early in Belgium and the Netherlands

YOUNGSTERS for whom Christmas doesn't come soon enough should live in Belgium or the Netherlands, for there December 6 would bring their holiday celebration. Christmas Day is a solemn occasion for religious thought, with faithful attendance at church services. All the festivities associated with that day elsewhere are transferred to the earlier date, called the Festival of St. Nicholas.

St. Nicholas Inspects before He Gives

St. Nicholas Eve brings a visit to each household from the venerable white-bearded saint in person, wearing his rich red bishop's robe and peaked cap, at an hour which he has previously made known through parents. A few minutes in advance, the excited children start their welcoming songs:

"Fill each empty hand and basket;
'Tis thy little ones who ask it.
So we sing, so we sing:
Thou wilt bring us everything!"

A knock at the door, never too soon, assures them that their songs have been heard, and instantly they are thrilled at seeing St. Nicholas. He questions them about their conduct and studies, reminding them of shortcomings and exacting promises of improvement. If he seems to know far more about their lives than any but a close relative possibly could, they are more than ever convinced of his remarkable powers. This is the occasion for much reciting of verses and texts, carefully learned by the children in hope of showing St. Nicholas their studiousness. Those who forget their little verses, or who must confess to conduct less than praiseworthy during the year, are threatened by the saint's rough black servant, who flourishes a large sack he has brought along for carrying off little children to be punished; but the threat is punishment enough. Then St. Nicholas tosses a shower of candies, fruit, and nuts into eagerly lifted baskets and departs, mysteriously promising that in the morning there will be further reason for thanking him.

The children prepare for that blissful morning by hanging stockings on the mantel, and on the windowsill placing their shoes, generously filled with grain for St. Nicholas' white horse or with cake for the old gentleman himself.

"Shoefuls" of Festivity on December 6

And true to their hopes, the morning of the Festival of St. Nicholas brings miracles. The humble wooden shoes on the windowsill have turned to chocolate shoes a foot long and brimming with candy, doubly welcome because to be given a shoe of any kind brings good luck. Sometimes St. Nicholas supplies large painted china shoes, to be used exclusively on his festival. Stockings are bulging with sweets, fruits and tiny gifts; as a gentle reminder, each contains a little harmless switch tied with ribbon. Toys, books, and trinkets for each child form a neat pile, which would not be complete without a cookie-man for the girls or a cookie-woman for boys. These cakes, two or three feet tall and decorated with a bow of red ribbon around the neck, look like gingerbread but are made of honey-dough. Some homes have even adopted from German neighbors the practice of having a Christmas tree, which should perhaps be called a St. Nicholas tree.

Variations on these festive themes are infinite, even in neighboring homes in the same community. Conservative folk of villages and rural districts enjoy St.

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Vienna lies at the crossroads of Europe, where the main trade routes from the Baltic to the Adriatic cross the great east-west highway of the Danube. The Danube continues to carry a heavy burden of shipping. No less than seven great railway lines meet within the city, and it seems likely that Vienna will remain an important center of distribution, despite political upheavals.

During the last few years Austria has relied increasingly upon tourist trade to balance the budget. More than two-thirds of the country is mountainous, with towering snow peaks, narrow valleys, hidden villages, and deep blue lakes—an ideal vacation land. During the summer, spas and health resorts are crowded, tiny *faltboats* shoot down the swift waters of the Inn, and energetic mountain climbers assault the most forbidding of Alpine peaks.

There are sports for every season. Skiing is a national sport in Austria, where Alpine technique was first developed. Among the countless centers for this sport are Innsbruck, surrounded by the steep, wooded slopes of the Tyrol, and St. Anton, amid the snow fields of the Arlberg, which is an important pass for railway lines.

Note: See also "Styria, a Favored Vacation Land of Central Europe," *National Geographic Magazine*, October, 1932; "Entering the Front Doors of Medieval Towns," March, 1932; "Danube, Highway of Races," December, 1929; "Looking Down on Europe," March, 1925; "Vienna—A Capital without a Nation," January, 1923; "The New Map of Europe," February, 1921; and "Austro-Italian Mountain Frontiers," April, 1915.

Bulletin No. 3, December 2, 1935.

Photograph by Emil Poole Albrecht

MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS IN THE MAKING

Two rising young citizens of Innsbruck, Austria, can enjoy the invigorating climate, the scenery, and the mountain-climbing that attract 200,000 visitors annually to the capital of Tyrol. When they are a little older, they may attend the local university, which is about 250 years old and draws a small percentage of its students from the United States. Narrow winding streets like this one exist side by side with broad modern thoroughfares in Innsbruck.

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St. Vincent: Isle of Arrowroot

LABOR troubles and riots that have jolted Britain's tiny Caribbean island of St. Vincent out of obscurity and into the headlines also may be felt halfway round the world in pantries, kitchens, nurseries, and sick-rooms.

St. Vincent, 250 miles north of Venezuela's coast off northern South America, is the leading producer of arrowroot, widely used as an invalid and baby food, and by housewives and cooks in making candies, desserts, puddings and biscuits, and for thickening gravies, soups, and sauces.

Arrowroot Growing Is Chief Industry

Green fields of arrowroot, resembling nothing so much as patches of string beans, dot the countryside of St. Vincent in colorful contrast to the blue of the tropical sea along the coast. Growing of arrowroot and production of the highly nutritious and digestible starch made from it is the chief industry of this little speck of British soil in the Caribbean Sea.

Less than twice the area of the District of Columbia, only 133 square miles, St. Vincent originally was thrust up from the ocean floor by volcanic activity. Its volcano, Soufriere, erupted disastrously as recently as 1902, with a loss of 2,000 lives and widespread destruction of sugar cane fields and property.

Against a blue tropical sky, the jumbled sharp peaks of St. Vincent's volcanic mountain backbone frame the little city of Kingstown, quaint with blue, yellow, and pink houses, and teeming with the activity of market days and waterfront freight handling. There are no piers at Kingstown, so freight must come ashore in lighters, making the last stage of the journey on the backs of stalwart Negro porters who wade through the surf carrying heavy crates and bags from boat to beach.

Heads Do the Work in St. Vincent

Through narrow streets paved with cobbles brought from abroad in early colonial days, straight-backed Negro women pad in bare feet, carrying on their heads everything from the week's wash to a load of produce for the market. Most of the islanders are Negroes.

From the other end of the island black boatmen come by sea with cargoes of fish and produce in strange boats that are half primitive dugout, half trim rowboat. These boats are hollowed out from logs cut in the mountains. The hollowed log is filled with stones and water and a fire is built beneath it. The weight and heat swell the logs into boat shape. Hand-made ribs strengthen the craft, and boards raise the sides to greater height.

Negro homes for the most part are little one-room cabins, with walls of sticks plastered with mud, and roofs of grass or sugar cane leaf thatch, but whitewashed and neatly kept inside. Many such a humble hut commands a view of sea and mountains from its hillside perch that a millionaire might envy.

Good roads, lined with palms and lush tropical growth, connect all parts of St. Vincent. Most of the farming is done on the windward, or east coast, for on the western shore the mountains rise steeply to 3,500 feet and more. Arrowroot is far from being the only crop, though the most important. Coconuts, sugar, rum, molasses, spices, cacao, and fish are island products.

St. Vincent is rich in history as well as in products of the soil. Its Botanic

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Nicholas most heartily, while large cities are beginning to be influenced toward Christmas festivities. Some homes celebrate both occasions.

Centuries ago, no doubt, the early winter harvest season in Europe was observed with generous gifts of fruit to children. Medieval legends of the generosity of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, in Asia Minor, built up an association between the earlier practice and his feast day, observed on December 6 as the reputed anniversary of his death about 350 A.D. Pictures of the reverend bishop represent him as carrying three purses which he once filled with gold and tossed secretly through the window of a poor nobleman who could not supply his three daughters with dowries for their marriage. Sometimes the purses are replaced by three golden apples or three balls which show his connection with pawnbrokers, whose patron saint he is. But to be impartial, he is also patron for Russia, travelers, sailors, merchants, bakers, school boys, and children in general.

He came to America, it is said, with Netherland settlers, as Santa Claus, which is baby-talk for St. Nicholas. Since many Protestants knew little of saints' days, festivities in his honor were joined to those already associated with Christmas.

Note: Information about Belgium and the Netherlands, the two countries in which the Festival of St. Nicholas is most generally celebrated, can be found in "New Country Awaits Discovery (the Netherlands)" and "Some Odd Pages from the Annals of the Tulip," September, 1933; "Beautiful Belgium, Restored by Peace (color insert)," November, 1929; "Vacation in Holland," September, 1929; "Rediscovering the Rhine," July, 1925; "Through the Back Doors of Belgium" and "Singing Towers of Holland and Belgium," May, 1925; and "Holland's War with the Sea," March, 1923.

Bulletin No. 4, December 2, 1935.

Photograph By Emil P. Albrecht

MINDING THE BABY TO IMPRESS ST. NICHOLAS

Although their home is Marken in the reclaimed land of the Zuider Zee (Ijsselmeer), St. Nicholas would have no trouble bringing these girls their reward for good behavior. His bishop's robe has the miraculous power of transporting him anywhere with lightning speed.

Garden, oldest in the New World, was established in 1763, and it was to obtain breadfruit tree specimens for this garden in 1787 that the British naval vessel *Bounty* sailed to the South Seas where the famous mutiny on the *Bounty* occurred. Eventually Captain Bligh of the *Bounty* was brought back to St. Vincent with 530 choice specimens for the garden.

A British Crown Colony, part of the Windward Group of the Lesser Antilles, St. Vincent has been an English possession since 1762, save for a few years of French occupancy during the American Revolution. Prior to 1762 the island had been claimed by both France and England. Columbus discovered the island in 1498, and found it populated with warlike Carib Indians. Their inscriptions on rocks still can be seen.

Note: See also "Hunting Useful Plants in the Caribbean," *National Geographic Magazine*, December, 1934; "To Bogotá and Back by Air," May, 1928; and "Map-Changing Medicine," September, 1922.

Bulletin No. 5, December 2, 1935.

Photograph by Jacob Gayer

BURDENS GO TO THEIR HEADS

Bandannas are both colorful and useful as shock absorbers in hauling home the day's marketing. It was an effort to provide the St. Vincent Negroes with cheap food that led to the importation of breadfruit trees, but in spite of the high cost of importing flour, Negroes still preferred bread from ovens instead of from trees. Breadfruit, when boiled and served with butter, resembles a very delectable potato.